Mr. Macklin in the Character of Shylock.

Nearest his heart; those are the very words.

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THE

Merchant of Venice.

A

COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRES-ROYAL

IN

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

By SHAKESPEARE.

Shakespeare (W.) K

LONDON:

Printed for J. WENMAN, No 144, FLEET-STREET; and Sold by all other Bookfellers in Town and Country

M DCC LXXVII.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

M E N.

Duke.
Anthonio.
Baſſanio.
Gratiano.
Lorenzo.
Solarino.
Salanio.

Shylock.
Tubal.
Launcelot.
Gobbo.
Leonardo.
Balthazar.
Stephano.

W O M E N.

Portia.
Jeſſica.

Neriſſa.

Senators of Venice, *Officers, Jailor, Servants, and other Attendants.*

SCENE, *partly at* Venice, *and partly at* Belmont, *the Seat of* Portia, *upon the Continent.*

THE

Merchant of Venice.

ACT I.

SCENE, *a Street in* Venice.

Enter Anthonio, Solarino, *and* Salanio.

Anth. IN ſooth, I know not why I am ſo ſad:
It wearies me; you ſay, it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What ſtuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn————
And ſuch a want-wit ſadneſs makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myſelf.

Sal. Your mind is toſſing on the ocean;
There, where your Argoſies, with portly ſail,
Like ſignors and rich burghers on the flood;
Or, as it were, the pageants of the ſea,
Do over-peer the petty traffickers,
That curtſy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Sola. Believe me, Sir, had I ſuch venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I ſhould be ſtill
Plucking the graſs, to know where ſits the wind;
Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads:
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,
Would make me ſad.

Sal. My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at ſea.
I ſhould not ſee the ſandy hour-glaſs run,
But I ſhould think of ſhallows and of flats;
And ſee my wealthy Andrew dock'd in ſand,
Veiling her high top lower than her ribs,
To kiſs her burial. Should I go to church,
And ſee the holy edifice of ſtone,
And not bethink me ſtraight of dang'rous rocks;
Which, touching but my gentle veſſel's ſide,
Would ſcatter all the ſpices on the ſtream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my ſilks;
And in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and ſhall I lack the thought
That ſuch a thing, bechanc'd, would make me ſad?
But tell not me————I know Anthonio
Is ſad, to think upon his merchandize.

Anth. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom truſted,
Nor in one place; nor is my whole eſtate
Upon the fortune of this preſent year:
Therefore, my merchandize makes me not ſad.

Sola. Why, then, you are in love?

Anth. Fy, fy!

Sola. Not in love, neither! Then let's ſay you're ſad,
Becauſe you are not merry; and 'twere as eaſy
For you to laugh and leap, and ſay you're merry,
Becauſe you are not ſad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath fram'd ſtrange fellows, in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh, like parrots, at a bagpiper;
And others of ſuch vinegar-aſpect,
That they'll not ſhew their teeth in way of ſmile,
Though Neſtor ſwear the jeſt be laughable.

Enter Baſſanio, Lorenzo, *and* Gratiano.

Sal. Here comes Baſſanio, your moſt noble kinſman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well;
We leave you now with better company.

Sola. I would have ſtaid till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Anth. Your worth is very dear in my regard:
I take it your own buſineſs calls on you,
And you embrace th'occaſion to depart.

Sal. Good-morrow, my good lords.

Baſſ. Good ſignors both, when ſhall we laugh? ſay, when?
You grow exceeding ſtrange. Muſt it be ſo?

Sal. We'll make our leiſures to attend on yours.

Sola. My lord Baſſanio, ſince you've found Anthonio,
We two will leave you; but, at dinner-time,
I pray you have in mind where we muſt meet.

Baſſ. I will not fail you. [*Exeunt* Solar. *and* Sala.

Gra. You look not well, ſignior Anthonio,
You have too much reſpect upon the world;
They loſe it, that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvelouſly chang'd.

Anth. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A ſtage, where every man muſt play his part,
And mine's a ſad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool————
With mirth, and laughter, let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why ſhould a man, whoſe blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandſire cut in alabaſter?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peeviſh! I tell thee what, Anthonio,
(I love thee, and it is my love that ſpeaks)
There are a ſort of men whoſe viſages
Do cream and mantle, like a ſtanding pond,
And do a wilful ſtilneſs entertain,
With purpoſe to be dreſt in an opinion,
Of wiſdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who ſhould ſay, I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!

O my Anthonio, I do know of thoſe,
That therefore only are reputed wiſe,
For ſaying nothing.
I'll teſt thee more of this, another time;
But lith not with this melancholy bait,
For this fool's gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo, fare ye well awhile;
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you then, till dinner-time.
I muſt be one of theſe ſame dumb wiſe men;
For Gratiano never lets me ſpeak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years more,
Thou ſhalt not know the ſound of thine own tongue.

Anth. Farewel; I'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks, i'faith; for ſilence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dry'd, and a maid not vendible.

[*Exeunt* Gra. *and* Loren.

Anth. Is that any thing, now?

Baſſ. Gratiano ſpeaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reaſons are as two grains of wheat, hid in two buſhels of chaff; you ſhall ſeek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the ſearch.

Anth. Well, tell me now, what lady is the ſame,
To whom you ſwore a ſecret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promis'd to tell me of?

Baſſ. 'Tis not unknown to you, Anthonio,
How much I have diſabled mine eſtate,
By ſhewing ſomething a more ſwelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance.
Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd
From ſuch a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time, ſomething too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Anthonio,
I owe the moſt, in money and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty,
T'unburden all my plots and purpoſes,
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Anth. I pray you, good Baſſanio, let me know it;
And if it ſtand, as you yourſelf ſtill do,
Within the eye of honour, be aſſur'd,
My purſe, my perſon, my extremeſt means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occaſions.

Baſſ. In my ſchool days, when I had loſt one ſhaft,
I ſhot his fellow of the ſelf-ſame flight,
The ſelf-ſame way, with more adviſed watch,
To find the other forth; by vent'ring both,
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,
Becauſe what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is loſt; but if you pleaſe
To ſhoot another arrow that ſelf-way
Which you did ſhoot the firſt, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully reſt debtor for the firſt.

Anth. You know me well; and herein ſpend but time,
To wind about my love with circumſtance;
And out of doubt, you do me now more wrong,
In making queſtion of my uttermoſt,
Than if you had made waſte of all I have.
Then do but ſay to me what I ſhould do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am preſt unto it: Therefore ſpeak.

Baſſ. In Belmont is a lady, richly left,
And ſhe is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wond'rous virtues. Sometime, from her eyes
I did receive fair ſpeechleſs meſſages;
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalu'd
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia:
Nor is the wide world ign'rant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in, from ev'ry coaſt,
Renowned ſuitors.
O, my Anthonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind preſages me ſuch thrift,
That I ſhould queſtionleſs be fortunate.

Anth. Thou know'ſt that all my fortunes are at ſea,
Nor have I money, nor commodity,
To raiſe a preſent ſum; therefore, go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do;
That ſhall be rack'd, even to the uttermoſt,
To furniſh thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, preſently inquire, and ſo will I,
Where money is; and I no queſtion make,
To have it of my truſt, or for my ſake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to* Portia's *Houſe in* Belmont.

A grand Saloon.

Three Caſkets are ſet out, one of Gold, another of Silver, and another of Lead.

Enter Portia *and* Neriſſa.

Por. By my troth, Neriſſa, my little body is weary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, ſweet Madam, if your miſeries were in the ſame abundance as your good fortunes are; and yet, for aught I ſee, they are as ſick that ſurfeit with too much, as they that ſtarve with nothing; therefore, it is no mean happineſs to be ſeated in the mean. Superfluity comes ſooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

Por. Good ſentences, and well pronounc'd.

Ner. They would be better, if well follow'd.

Por. If to do, were as eaſy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes palaces. He is a good divine that follows his own inſtructions; I can eaſier teach twenty what were good to be done, than to be one of the twenty to follow my own teaching. But this reaſoning is not in faſhion, to chuſe me a huſband. O me, the word chuſe! I may neither chuſe whom I would, nor refuſe whom I diſlike; ſo is the will of a living daughter curb'd by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Neriſſa, that I cannot chuſe one, nor refuſe none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men, at their death, have good inſpirations: therefore, the lottery that he hath deviſed, in theſe three cheſts of gold, ſilver, and lead, (whereof who chuſes his meaning, chuſes you) will, no doubt, never be choſen by any, rightly, but one who ſhall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of theſe princely ſuitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them, and as thou nam'ſt them I will deſcribe them; and, according to my deſcription, level at my affection.

Ner. Firſt, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a dolt, indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horſe; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own parts, that he can ſhoe him himſelf: I am much afraid, my lady, his mother, play'd falſe with a ſmith.

Ner. Then there is the Count Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown; as who ſhould ſay, If you will not have me, chuſe. He hears merry tales, and ſmiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philoſopher when he grows old, being ſo full of unmannerly ſadneſs in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth, than to either of theſe. Heav'n defend me from theſe two.

Ner. How ſay you by the French lord, Monſieur Le Boun?

Por. Heaven made him, and therefore let him pass for a man.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk; when he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast; the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to chuse, and chuse the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for if the devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will chuse it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords; they have acquainted me with their determination, which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit; unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibilla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtain'd by the manner of my father's will: I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I doat on his very absence, and wish them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Mountferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, he was so call'd.

Ner. True, Madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes look'd upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise. How now! what news?

Enter Balthazar.

Bal. The four strangers seek for you, Madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word, the prince, his master, will be here, to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome, with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewel, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint, and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me, than wive me. Come, Nerissa.—Sirrah, go before; while we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a publick Place in* Venice.

Enter Bassanio *and* Shylock.

Shy. Three thousand ducats? Well.

Bass. Ay, Sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months? Well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Anthonio shall be bound.

Shy. Anthonio shall become bound? Well.

Bass. May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Anthonio bound?

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Anthonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. No, no; no, no: My meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me, that he is sufficient: Yet his means are in supposition; he hath an argosie bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Ryalto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England; and other ventures he hath, squander'd abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves, and land-thieves; I mean, pirates; and then there is the peril of the waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats? I think, I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assur'd you may.

Shy. I will be assur'd I may; and that I may be assur'd, I will bethink me. May I speak with Anthonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation, which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjur'd the devil into! I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Ryalto?—— Who is he comes here?

Enter Anthonio.

Bass. This is Signior Anthonio.

Shy. [*Aside.*] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him, for he is a Christian:
But more, for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here, with us, in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Ev'n there, where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Curs'd be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?——

Shy. I am debating of my present store,
And by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me: but soft, how many months
Do you desire? Rest you fair, good Signior;
[*To* Anthonio.
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Anth. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking, nor by giving of excess, [row,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom——Is he yet possest,
How much you would?

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Anth. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot; three months, you told me so;
Well then, your bond; and let me see——but hear you,
Methought you said, you neither lend nor borrow,
Upon advantage.

Anth. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep—
This Jacob, from our holy Abraham, was
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)
The third possessor; ay, he was the third.

Anth. And what of him, did he take interest?

Shy. No, not take int'rest: not, as you would say,
Directly interest; mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromis'd,
That all the yeanlings, which were streak'd and py'd,
Should fall as Jacob's hire; the ewes, being rank,
In th' end of autumn turned to the rams;
And when the work of generation was

Between theſe woolly breders, in the act,
The ſkilful ſhepherd peel'd him certain wands;
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,
He ſtuck them up before the fulſome ewes;
Who, then conceiving, did, in yeaning time,
Fall party-colour'd lambs, and thoſe were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive; and he was bleſt;
And thrift is bleſſing, if men ſteal it not.

Anth. This was a venture, Sir, that Jacob ſerv'd for;
A thing not in his power to bring to paſs,
But ſway'd and faſhion'd by the hand of heav'n.
Was this inſerted to make int'reſt good?
Or is your gold and ſilver ewes and rams?

Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as faſt.

Anth. Mark you this, Baſſanio?
The devil can cite ſcripture for his purpoſe.——
An evil ſoul, producing holy witneſs,
Is like a villain with a ſmiling cheek;
A goodly apple rotten at the heart.
O, what a goodly outſide falſhood hath!

Shy. Three thouſand ducats! 'tis a good round ſum.
Three months from twelve, then let me ſee the rate.

Anth. Well, Shylock, ſhall we be beholden to you?

Shy. Signior Anthonio, many a time and oft,
On the Ryalto you have rated me,
About my monies and my uſances.
Still have I borne it with a patient ſhrug;
(For ſufferance is the badge of all our tribe)
You call me miſbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And ſpit upon my Jewiſh gaberdine;
And all for th' uſe of that which is my own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to then; you come to me, and you ſay,
Shylock, we would have monies: you ſay ſo;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me, as you ſpurn a ſtranger cur
Over your threſhold. Money is your ſuit;
What ſhould I ſay to you? Should I not ſay,
Hath a dog money? Is it poſſible,
A cur can lend three thouſand ducats? Or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondſman's key,
With bated breath, and whiſp'ring humbleneſs,
Say this: Fair Sir, you ſpit on me, laſt Wedneſday,
You ſpurn'd me, ſuch a day; another time,
You call'd me dog; and for theſe courteſies
I'll lend you thus much monies?

Anth. I am as like to call thee ſo again,
To ſpit on thee again, to ſpurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friend (for when did friendſhip take
A breed of barren metal of his friend)
But lend it rather to thine enemy:
Who, if he break, thou may'ſt with better face
Exact the penalty.

Shy. Why, how you ſtorm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love;
Forget the ſhames you have ſtain'd me with;
Supply your preſent wants, and take no doit
Of uſance of my monies, and you'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

Anth. This were kindneſs.

Shy. This kindneſs will I ſhew;
Go with me to a notary, ſeal me there
Your ſingle bond: and, in a merry ſport,
If you repay me not on ſuch a day,
In ſuch a place, ſuch ſum, or ſums, as are
Expreſs'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound,
Of your fair fleſh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body it ſhall pleaſe me.

Anth. Content, in faith; I'll ſeal to ſuch a bond,
And ſay, there is much kindneſs in the Jew.

Baſſ. You ſhall not ſeal to ſuch a bond for me.
I'll rather dwell in my neceſſity.

Anth. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it;
Within theſe two months (that's a month before
This bond expires) I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy. O father Abraham, what theſe Chriſtians are,
Whoſe own hard dealings teach them to ſuſpect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this,
If he ſhould break his day, what ſhould I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's fleſh, taken from a man,
Is not ſo eſtimable, or profitable,
As fleſh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I ſay,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendſhip!
If he will take it, ſo; if not, adieu;
And for my love, I pray you, wrong me not.

Anth. Yes, Shylock, I will ſeal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purſe the ducats, ſtraight;
See to my houſe, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave, and preſently
I will be with you. [*Exit.*

Anth. Hie thee, gentle Jew.
This Hebrew will turn Chriſtian; he grows kind.

Baſſ. I like not fair terms, and a villain's mind,

Anth. Come on, in this there can be no diſmay;
My ſhips come home a month before the day.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *the* Ryalto *at* Venice.

Enter Launcelot, *alone.*

Laun. CErtainly, my conſcience will ſerve me to run from this Jew, my maſter. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, ſaying to me, Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot, or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, uſe your legs, take the ſtart, run away. My conſcience ſays, No; take heed, honeſt Launcelot: take heed, honeſt Gobbo; or, as aforeſaid, Honeſt Launcelot Gobbo, do not run; ſcorn running with thy heels. Well, the moſt courageous fiend bids me pack; *via!* ſays the fiend; away, ſays the fiend; for the heavens rouſe up a brave mind, ſays the fiend, and run. Well, my conſcience, hanging about the neck of my heart, ſays very wiſely to me, my honeſt friend, Launcelot, being an honeſt man's ſon, or rather an honeſt woman's ſon——(for, indeed, my father did ſomething ſmack, ſomething grow to; he had a kind of taſte)——well, my conſcience ſays, budge not; budge, ſays the fiend; budge not, ſays my conſcience; conſcience, ſay I, you counſel ill; fiend, ſay I, you counſel ill. To be rul'd by my conſcience, I ſhould ſtay with the Jew, my maſter; who, heav'n bleſs the mark, is a kind of devil; and to run away from the Jew, I ſhould be rul'd by the fiend; who, ſaving your reverence, is the devil himſelf. Certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and in my conſcience, my conſcience is but a kind of hard conſcience, to offer to counſel me to ſtay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counſel: I will run; fiend, my heels are at your command, I will run.

Enter Old Gobbo, *with a Basket.*

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. O heav'ns, this is my true-begotten father, who being more than sand-blind, high gravel blind, knows me not; I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand, at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down directly to the Jew's house.

Gob. By heaven's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him, or no?

Laun. Talk you of young master Launcelot? (Mark me, now, now will I raise the waters:) talk you of young master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, Sir, but a poor man's son. His father, though I say't, is an honest exceeding poor man; and, heav'n be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, Sir.

Laun. But, I pray you, *ergo*, old man; *ergo*, I beseech you, talk you of young master Launcelot?

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, master Launcelot; talk not of master Launcelot, father, for the young gentleman (according to fates and destinies, and such odd sayings, the sisters three, and such branches of learning) is, indeed, deceased; or, as you would say, in plain terms, gone to heav'n.

Gob. Marry, heav'n forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff, or a prop? Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day! I know you not, young gentleman; but I pray you, tell me, is my boy, heav'n rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, Sir, I am sand-blind, I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father, that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son; give me your blessing, truth will come to light: murder cannot be hid long, (a man's son may) but in the end, truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, Sir, stand up; I am sure, you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and, I am sure, Margery, your wife, is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed. I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art my own flesh and blood. Lord worship'd might he be! What a beard hast thou got? thou hast got more hair on thy chin, than Dobbin, my thill-horse, has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward: I am sure, he had more hair on his tail, than I have on my face, when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou chang'd! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How agree you, now?

Laun. Well, well; but for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew. Give him a present! give him a halter. I am famish'd in his service. You may tell every rib I have with your fingers. Father, I am glad you are come; give me your present to one master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries; if I serve him not, I will run as far as heav'n has any ground. O rare fortune! here comes the man. To him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter Bassanio, *with* Leonardo, *and a follower or two more.*

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted, that supper be ready, at the farthest, by five of the clock: see these letters deliver'd, put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come, anon, to my lodging.

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. Heav'n bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy, wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, Sir, a poor boy———

Laun. Not a poor boy, Sir; but the rich Jew's man, that would, Sir, as my father shall specify—

Gob. He hath a great infection, Sir, as one would say, to serve.

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify———

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins.

Laun. To be brief; the very truth is, that the Jew having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you.

Gob. I have here a dish of doves, that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is———

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, Sir.

Gob. This is the very defect of the matter, Sir.

Bass. I know thee well, thou hast obtain'd thy suit;
Shylock, thy master, spoke with me, this day,
And hath preferr'd thee; if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted, between my master Shylock, and you, Sir; you have the grace of heav'n, Sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son,
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire
My lodging out; give him a livery,
More guarded than his fellows: see it done.

Laun. Father, in: I cannot get a service, no! I have ne'er a tongue in my head! Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table, which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune. Go to, here's a simple line of life; here's a small trifle of wives. Alas, fifteen wives is nothing, eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man! and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed, here are simple 'scapes! Well, if fortune be a woman, she's a good wench, for this gear.

Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew, in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt* Laun. *and* Gob.

Baſſ. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this,
Theſe things being bought, and orderly beſtow'd,
Return in haſte, for I do feaſt, to-night,
My beſt eſteem'd acquaintance. Hie thee, go.

Leon. My beſt endeavours ſhall be done herein.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Where is your maſter?

Leon. Yonder, Sir, he walks. [*Exit* Leonardo.

Gra. Signior Baſſanio——

Baſſ. Gratiano!

Gra. I have a ſuit to you.

Baſſ. You have obtain'd it.

Gra. You muſt not deny me; I muſt go with you to Belmont.

Baſſ. Why, then you muſt. But hear thee, Gratiano,
Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice;
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in ſuch eyes as ours appear no faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they ſhew
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
T' allay, with ſome cold drops of modeſty,
Thy ſkipping ſpirit; leſt through thy wild behaviour,
I be miſconſtru'd in the place I go to,
And loſe my hopes.

Gra. Signior Baſſanio, hear me;
If I do not put on a ſober habit,
Talk with reſpect, and ſwear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pockets, look demurely;
Nay, more, while grace is ſaying, hood mine eyes
Thus, with my hat, and ſigh, and ſay, Amen!
Ne'er truſt me more.

Baſſ. Well, we ſhall ſee your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night; you ſhall not gage
By what we do to-night.

Baſſ. No, that were pity.
I would intreat you rather to put on
Your boldeſt ſuit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpoſe merriment: but fare you well,
I have ſome buſineſs.

Gra. And I muſt to Lorenzo and the reſt:
But we will viſit you at ſupper-time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to* Shylock's *Houſe.*

Enter Jeſſica *and* Launcelot.

Jeſ. I'm ſorry thou wilt leave my father ſo;
Our houſe is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didſt rob it of ſome taſte of tediouſneſs:
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee;
And, Launcelot, ſoon at ſupper ſhalt thou ſee
Lorenzo, who is thy new maſter's gueſt;
Give him this letter, do it ſecretly,
And ſo farewel: I would not have my father
See me talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu! Tears exhibit my tongue; moſt beautiful Pagan, moſt ſweet Jew! if a Chriſtian did not play the knave, and get thee, I am much deceiv'd. But adieu! theſe fooliſh drops do ſomewhat drown my manly ſpirit. Adieu!

Jeſ. Farewel, good Launcelot.
Alack, what heinous ſin it is in me,
To be aſham'd to be my father's child?
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O, Lorenzo,
If thou keep promiſe, I ſhall end this ſtrife,
Become a Chriſtian, and thy loving wife.

SONG, *by* Jeſſica.

Haſte, Lorenzo, haſte away,
To my longing arms repair,
With impatience I ſhall die;
Come, and eaſe thy Jeſſy's *care:*
Let me then in wanton play,
Sigh and gaze my ſoul away. [Exit.

SCENE, *a Street in* Venice.

Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Solarino, *and* Salanio.

Lor. Nay, we will ſlink away in ſupper-time, diſguiſe us at my lodging, and return all in an hour.

Gra. We have not made a good preparation.

Sal. We have not ſpoke as yet of torch-bearers.

Sola. 'Tis vile, unleſs it may be quaintly ordered;
And better, in my mind, not undertook.

Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock, we have two hours
To furniſh us. Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

Enter Launcelot, *with a Letter.*

Laun. An't ſhall pleaſe you to break up this, it ſhall ſeem to ſignify.

Lor. I know the hand; in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter that the paper it writ on,
Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, Sir.

Lor. Whither goeſt thou?

Laun. Marry, Sir, to bid my old maſter, the Jew, to ſup to-night with my new maſter, the Chriſtian.

Lor. Hold, here, take this; tell gentle Jeſſica,
I will not fail her; ſpeak it privately.
Go—Gentlemen, will you prepare for this maſque, to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer. [*Exit* Laun.

Sal. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it ſtraight.

Sola. And ſo will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano,
At Gratiano's lodgings, ſome hours hence.

Sal. 'Tis good, we do ſo. [*Exit.*

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jeſſica?

Lor. I muſt needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I ſhall take her from her father's houſe;
What gold and jewels ſhe is furniſh'd with;
What page's ſuit ſhe hath in readineſs.
If e'er the Jew, her father, come to heav'n,
It will be for his gentle daughter's ſake:
And never dare miſfortune croſs her foot,
Unleſs ſhe do it under this excuſe,
That ſhe is iſſue to a faithleſs Jew.
Come, go with me; peruſe this, as thou goeſt:
Fair Jeſſica ſhall be my torch-bearer. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, Shylock's *Houſe.*

Enter Shylock *and* Launcelot.

Shy. Well, thou ſhalt ſee, thy eyes ſhall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Baſſanio.
What, Jeſſica!—Thou ſhalt not gormandize,
As thou haſt done with me—What, Jeſſica!——
And ſleep and ſnore, and rend apparel out.
Why, Jeſſica! I ſay.

Laun. Why, Jeſſica!

Shy. Who bid thee call? I did not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worſhip was won't to tell me, that I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter Jeſſica.

Jeſ. Call you? What is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth to ſupper, Jeſſica;
There are my keys. But wherefore ſhould I go?
I am not bid, for love; they flatter me:
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Chriſtian. Jeſſica, my girl,
Look to my houſe; I am right loth to go;
There is ſome ill a brewing tow'rds my reſt,
For I did dream of money-bags, to-night.

Laun. I beſeech you, Sir, go; my young maſter doth expect your reproach.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. And they have conſpired together. I will not ſay, you ſhall ſee a maſque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my noſe fell a bleeding on Black Monday laſt, at ſix o'clock i' th' morning, falling out that year on Aſh-wedneſday was four years, in the afternoon.

Shy. What! are there maſques? Hear you me, Jeſſica:
Lock up the doors; and when you hear the drum,
And the vile ſqueaking of the wry-neck'd fife,
Clamber you not up to the caſements then,
Nor thruſt your head into the public ſtreet,
To gaze on Chriſtian fools with varniſh'd faces,
But ſtop my houſe's ears; I mean, my caſements.
Let not the ſound of ſhallow foppery enter
My ſober houſe. By Jacob's ſtaff I ſwear,
I have no mind of feaſting forth to-night:
But I will go. Go you before me, ſirrah:
Say, I will come.

Laun. I will go before, Sir.
Miſtreſs, look out at window, for all this:
There will come a Chriſtian by,
Will be worth a Jeweſs' eye. [*Exit* Laun.

Shy. What ſays that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

Jeſ. His words were, Farewel, miſtreſs: nothing elſe.

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder:
Snail-ſlow in profit, but he ſleeps by day
More than the wild cat: drones hive not with me,
Therefore I part with him; and part with him
To one, that I would have him help to waſte
His borrow'd purſe. Well, Jeſſica, go in,
Perhaps I will return immediately;
Do as I bid you——
Shut the doors after you: *faſt bind, faſt find*;
A proverb never ſtale in thrifty mind. [*Exit.*

Jeſ. Farewel; and, if my fortune be not croſt,
I have a father, you a daughter loſt. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *a Street before* Shylock's *Houſe.*

Enter Gratiano *and* Salanio, *in Maſquerade.*

Gra. This is the pent-houſe, under which Lorenzo deſir'd us to make a ſtand.

Sal. His hour is almoſt paſt.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Sal. O, ten times faſter Venus' pigeons fly,
To ſeal love's bonds new made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

Gra. That ever holds.

Sal. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter Lorenzo

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait;
When you ſhall pleaſe to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you, then. Come, approach;
Here dwells my father Jew.

SONG, *by* Lorenzo.

I.

My bliſs too long my bride denies,
Apace the wafting ſummer flies;
Nor yet the wint'ry blaſts I fear,
Nor ſtorms nor night ſhall keep me here.

II.

What may for ſtrength with ſteel compare?
O love has fetters ſtronger far!
By bolts of ſteel are limbs confin'd,
But cruel love enchains the mind.

III.

No longer, then, perplex thy breaſt;
When thoughts torment, the firſt are beſt:
'Tis mad to go, 'tis death to ſtay;
Away, my Jeſſe, *haſte away.*

Hoa, who's within?

Jeſſica *above.*

Jeſ. Who are you? tell me for more than certainty;
Albeit I'll ſwear that I do know your tongue.

Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jeſ. Lorenzo certain, and my love indeed:
For who love I ſo much; and now who knows,
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor. Heav'n and my thoughts are witneſs that thou art.

Jeſ. Here, catch this caſket, it is worth the pains.

Lor. But come at once——
For the cloſe night doth play the runaway,
And we are ſtaid for at Baſſanio's feaſt.

Jeſ. I will make faſt the doors, and gild myſelf
With ſome more ducats, and be with you ſtraight.
[*Exit from above.*

Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.

Lor. Beſhrew me, but I love her heartily!
For ſhe is wiſe, if I can judge of her;
And fair ſhe is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true ſhe is, as ſhe hath prov'd herſelf;
And therefore like herſelf, wiſe, fair, and true,
Shall ſhe be placed in my conſtant ſoul.

Enter Jeſſica, *to them.*

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen, away;
Our maſquing mates by this time for us ſtay.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *the* Ryalto.

Enter Solarino *and* Salanio.

Sal. Why, man, I ſaw Baſſanio under ſail;
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ſhip, I'm ſure, Lorenzo is not.

Sola. The villain Jew with outcries rais'd the duke,
Who went with him to ſearch Baſſanio's ſhip.

Sal. He came too late, the ſhip was under ſail;
But there the duke was given to underſtand,
That in a gondola were ſeen together
Lorenzo and his am'rous Jeſſica:
Beſides, Anthonio certify'd the duke,
They were not with Baſſanio, in his ſhip.

Sola. I never heard a paſſion ſo confus'd,
So ſtrange, outrageous, and ſo variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the ſtreets;
My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter,
Fled with a Chriſtian! O my Chriſtian ducats!
Juſtice, the law, my ducats, and my daughter!
A ſealed bag, two ſealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, ſtol'n from me by my daughter!
And jewels! Juſtice! find the girl;
She hath the jewels upon her, and the ducats.

Sola. Let good Anthonio look he keep his day,
Or he ſhall pay for this.

Sal. Marry, well remember'd.
I reaſon'd with a Frenchman, yeſterday,
Who told me, in the narrow ſeas that part
The French and Engliſh, there miſcarry'd
A veſſel of our country, richly fraught:
I thought upon Anthonio, when he told me,
And wiſh'd in ſilence that it were not his.

Sola. You were beſt tell Anthonio what you hear;
Yet do not ſuddenly, for it may grieve him.

Sal. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I ſaw Baſſanio and Anthonio part.
Baſſanio told him he would make ſome ſpeed
Of his return: he anſwer'd, Do not ſo,

Slubber not buſineſs for my ſake, Baſſanio,
But ſtay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond, which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love;
Be merry, and employ your chiefeſt thoughts
To courtſhip, and ſuch fair oſtents of love
As ſhall conveniently become you there.
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him;
And, with affection wond'rous ſenſible,
He wrung Baſſanio's hand; and ſo they parted.

Sola. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,
And quicken his embraced heavineſs
With ſome delight or other.

Sal. Do we ſo. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE, *a Street in* Venice.

Enter Salanio *and* Solarino.

Sola. NOW, what news on the Ryalto?

Sal. Why yet it lives there uncheck'd, that Anthonio hath a ſhip of rich lading wreckt on the narrow ſeas; the Goodwins, I think, they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal; where the carcaſſes of many a tall ſhip lie bury'd, as they ſay, if my goſſip, Report, be an honeſt woman of her word.

Sola. I would ſhe were as lying a goſſip in that, as ever knapt ginger, or made her neighbours believe ſhe wept for the death of a third huſband. But it is true, without any ſlips of prolixity, or croſſing the plain highway of talk, that the good Anthonio, the honeſt Anthonio——O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

Sal. Come, the full ſtop.

Sola. Why, the end is, he hath loſt a ſhip.

Sal. I would it might prove the end of his loſſes.

Sola. Let me ſay Amen, betimes, leſt the devil croſs thy prayer; for here he comes, in the likeneſs of a Jew. How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Enter Shylock.

Shy. You knew (none ſo well, none ſo well as you) of my daughter's flight.

Sal. That's certain; I, for my part, knew the taylor that made the wings ſhe flew withal.

Sola. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damn'd for it.

Sal. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own fleſh and blood to rebel!

Sola. Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it, at theſe years!

Shy. I ſay, my daughter is my fleſh and blood.

Sal. There is more difference between thy fleſh and hers, than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods, than there is between red wine and rheniſh. But tell us, do you hear whether Anthonio have had any loſs at ſea, or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match; a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dares ſcarce ſhew his head on the Ryalto; a beggar, that us'd to come ſo ſmug upon the mart! let him look to his bond; he was wont to call me uſurer; let him look to his bond; he was wont to lend money for a Chriſtian courteſy; let him look to his bond.

Sal. Why, I am ſure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his fleſh: what's that good for?

Shy. To bait fiſh withal. If it will feed nothing elſe, it will feed my revenge. He has diſgrac'd me, and hinder'd me of half a million; laugh'd at my loſſes, mock'd at my gains, ſcorn'd my nation, thwarted my bargains, cool'd my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reaſon? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimenſions, ſenſes, affections, paſſions? fed with the ſame food, hurt with the ſame weapons, ſubject to the ſame diſeaſes, heal'd by the ſame means, warm'd and cool'd by the ſame winter and ſummer, as a Chriſtian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poiſon us, do we not die? if you wrong us, ſhall we not revenge? If we are like you in the reſt, we will reſemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Chriſtian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Chriſtian wrong a Jew, what ſhould his ſufferance be, by Chriſtian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute; and it ſhall go hard, but I will better the inſtruction.

Enter Tubal.

Sola. Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be match'd, unleſs the devil himſelf turn Jew. [*Exeunt* Sal. *and* Sola.

Shy. How, now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? haſt thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why there, there; there, there! a diamond gone coſt me two thouſand ducats in Frankfort! The curſe never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now. Two thouſand ducats in that, and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! O, would ſhe were hears'd at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them; why ſo? And I know not what's ſpent in the ſearch: Why, thou loſs upon loſs! The thief gone with ſo much, and ſo much to find the thief; and no ſatisfaction, no revenge, nor no ill-luck ſtirring, but what lights o' my ſhoulders; no ſighs but o' my breathing, no tears but o' my ſhedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill-luck, too; Anthonio, as I heard in Genoa——

Shy. What, what, what? ill-luck? ill-luck?

Tub. Hath an argoſie caſt away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank god, I thank god! Is it true? is it true?

Tub. I ſpoke with ſome of the ſailors that eſcap'd the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal. Good news, good news! Ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter ſpent in Genoa, as I heard, one night, fourſcore ducats.

Shy. Thou ſtick'ſt a dagger in me; I ſhall never ſee my gold again; fourſcore ducats at a ſitting! fourſcore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Anthonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that ſwear he cannot chuſe but break.

Shy. I am glad of it; I'll plague him, I'll torture him; I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them ſhew'd me a ring, that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! thou tortureſt me, Tubal; it was my turquoiſe, I had it of Leah when I was a batchelor; I would not have given it for a wilderneſs of monkies.

Tub. But Anthonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true; go ſeek me an officer, beſpeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandize I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our ſynagogue; go, good Tubal; at our ſynagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a grand Saloon in* Portia's *Houſe.*

Enter Baſſanio, Portia, Gratiano, *and Attendants.*

The Caſkets are ſet out.

Por. I pray you, tarry! pauſe, a day or two,
Before you hazard; for in chuſing wrong
I loſe your company; therefore, forbear awhile.
There's ſomething tells me (but it is not love)
I would not loſe you; and, you know, yourſelf,
Hate counſels not in ſuch a quality.
I could teach you
How to chuſe right, but I am then forſworn:
So will I never be. So you may miſs me;
But if you do, you'll make me wiſh a ſin,
That I had been forſworn.

Baſſ. Let me chuſe:
For as I am, I live upon the rack.
So let me to my fortune and the caſkets.

Por. Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them;
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Neriſſa, and the reſt, ſtand all aloof,
Let muſick ſound, while he doth make his choice:
Then, if he loſe, he makes a ſwan-like end,
Fading in muſick.

[*Muſic plays, and* Baſſanio *goes to the caſkets.*

Baſſ. So may the outward ſhews be leaſt themſelves:
The world is ſtill deceiv'd with ornament.
In law, what plea ſo tainted and corrupt,
But being ſeaſon'd with a gracious voice
Obſcures the ſhow of evil? in religion,
What damned error, but ſome ſober brow
Will bleſs it, and approve it with a text;
Hiding the groſſneſs with fair ornament?
There is no vice ſo ſimple, but aſſumes
Some mark of virtue on its outward parts.
How many cowards, whoſe hearts are all as falſe
As ſtairs of ſand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;
Who, inward ſearcht, have livers white as milk?
Then, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee:
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge,
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatneſt, than doth promiſe aught,
Thy plainneſs moves me more than eloquence;
And here chuſe I; joy be the conſequence!

Por. O love, be moderate, allay thy extaſy!
In meaſure rain thy joy, ſcant this exceſs;
I feel too much thy bleſſing, make it leſs,
For fear I ſurfeit. [*Opening the leaden caſket.*

Baſſ. What find I here?
Fair Portia's counterfeit! what demi-god
Hath come ſo near creation? Move theſe eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are ſever'd lips
Parted with ſugar breath; ſo ſweet a bar
Should ſunder ſuch ſweet friends: but her eyes—
How could he ſee to do them? having made one,
Methinks it ſhould have power to ſteal both his,
And leave itſelf unfiniſh'd. Here's the ſcrowl,
The continent and ſummary of my fortune.

You that chuſe not by the view,
Chance as fair, and chuſe as true:
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content, and ſeek no new.
If you be well pleas'd with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliſs,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiſs.

A gentle ſcrowl! Fair lady, by your leave:
[*Kiſſing her.*
I come by note to give, and to receive;
As doubtful whether what I ſee be true,
Until confirm'd, ſign'd, ratify'd, by you.

Por. You ſee me, lord Baſſanio, where I ſtand,
Such as I am; tho', for myſelf alone,
I would not be ambitious in my wiſh,
To wiſh myſelf much better; yet, for you,
I would be trebled twenty times myſelf,
A thouſand times more fair, ten thouſand times
More rich; that, to ſtand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account: but the full ſum of me
Is an unleſſon'd girl, unſchool'd, unpractis'd;
Happy in this, ſhe is not yet ſo old
But ſhe may learn; more happy then in this,
She is not bred ſo dull but ſhe can learn;
Happieſt of all, is, that her gentle ſpirit
Commits itſelf to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myſelf, and what is mine, to you and yours
Is now converted. But now I was the lord
Of this fair manſion, maſter of my ſervants,
Queen o'er myſelf; and even now, but now,
This houſe, theſe ſervants, and this ſame myſelf,
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which, when you part from, loſe, or give away,
Let it preſage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Baſſ. Madam, you have bereft me of all words;
But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O then be bold to ſay, Baſſanio's dead.

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have ſtood by, and ſeen your wiſhes proſper,
To cry, Great joy, good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My lord Baſſanio, and my gentle lady,
I wiſh you all the joy that you can wiſh;
For, I am ſure, you can wiſh none from me;
And when your honours mean to ſolemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beſeech you,
E'en at that time, I may be married too.

Baſſ. With all my heart, ſo thou canſt get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordſhip, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as ſwift as yours;
You ſaw the miſtreſs, I beheld the maid;
You lov'd; I lov'd; for intermiſſion
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune ſtood upon the caſket there;
And ſo did mine too, as the matter falls:
For wooing here, until I ſweat again,
And ſwearing, till my very roof was dry,
With oaths of love; at laſt, if promiſe laſt,
I got a promiſe of this fair-one here,
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Atchiev'd her miſtreſs.

Por. Is this true, Neriſſa?

Ner. Madam, it is, ſo you ſtand pleas'd withal.

Baſſ. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

Baſſ. Our feaſt ſhall be much honour'd in your marriage.

Gra. We'll play with them, the firſt boy, for a thouſand ducats.

Ner. What, and ſtake down?

Gra. No; we ſhall ne'er win at that ſport, and ſtake down.

But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What! and my old Venetian friend, Salanio?

Enter Lorenzo, Jeſſica, *and* Salanio.

Baſſ. Lorenzo and Salanio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new intereſt here,
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen
(Sweet Portia) welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord; they are intirely welcome.

Lor. I thank your honour; for my part, my lord,
My purpoſe was not to have ſeen you here;
But meeting with Salanio by the way,
He did intreat me, paſt all ſaying nay,
To come with him along.

Sal. I did, my lord,
And I have reaſon for't: Signior Anthonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives* Baſſanio *a letter.*

Baſſ. Ere I ope this letter,
I pray you tell me how my good friend doth?

Sal. Not ſick, my lord, unleſs it be in mind;
Nor well, unleſs in mind; his letter there
Will ſhew you his eſtate. [Baſſanio *opens the letter.*

Gra. Neriſſa, cheer yon ſtranger: bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salanio! what's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Anthonio?
I know he will be glad of our ſucceſs.
We are the Jaſons, we have won the fleece.

Sal. Would you had won the fleece that he hath loſt!

Por. There are ſome ſhrewd contents in yon ſame paper,
That ſteal the colour from Baſſanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; elſe nothing in the world,
Could turn ſo much the conſtitution
Of any conſtant man. What, worſe and worſe!
With leave, Baſſanio, I am half yourſelf,
And I muſt have the half of any thing
That this ſame paper brings you.

Baſſ. O, ſweet Portia!
Here are a few of the unpleaſant'ſt words
That ever blotted paper. Gentle lady,
When I did firſt impart my love to you,
I freely told you all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myſelf at nothing, you ſhall ſee
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My ſtate was nothing, I ſhould then have told you,
That I was worſe than nothing: For, indeed,
I have engag'd myſelf to a dear friend,
Engag'd my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady,
The paper, as the body of my friend;
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Iſſuing life-blood. But is it true, Salanio?
Have all his ventures fail'd? What! not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, from England,
From Liſbon, Barbary, and India?
And not one veſſel 'ſcap'd the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Sal. Not one, my lord.
Beſides, it ſhould appear, that if he had
The preſent money to diſcharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature that did bear the ſhape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man.
He plies the duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the ſtate,
If they deny him juſtice. Twenty merchants,
The duke himſelf, and the magnificoes
Of greateſt port, have all perſuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea,
Of forfeiture, of juſtice, and his bond.

Jeſ. When I was with him I have heard him ſwear,
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Anthonio's fleſh,
Than twenty times the value of the ſum
That he did owe him. And I know, my lord,
If law, authority, and pow'r deny not,
It will go hard with poor Anthonio.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Baſſ. The deareſt friend to me, the kindeſt man!
And one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears,
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What ſum owes he the Jew?

Baſſ. For me, three thouſand ducats.

Por. What, no more!
Pay him ſix thouſand, and deface the bond;
Double ſix thouſand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this deſcription
Shall loſe a hair thro' my Baſſanio's fault.
Firſt, go with me to church, and call me wife,
And then away to Venice, to your friend:
For never ſhall you lie by Portia's ſide
With an unquiet ſoul. You ſhall have gold
To pay the petty debt, twenty times o'er.
When it is paid, bring your true friend along;
My maid Neriſſa, and myſelf, mean time,
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you ſhall hence upon your wedding-day.
Bid your friends welcome, ſhew a merry cheer;
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend?

Baſſanio *reads.*

Sweet Baſſanio, my ſhips have all miſcarried, and my creditors grow cruel; my eſtate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and ſince, in paying it, it is impoſſible I ſhould live, all debts are cleared between you and me, if I might but ſee you at my death; notwithſtanding, uſe your pleaſure. If your love do not perſuade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O, love! diſpatch all buſineſs, and be gone.

Baſſ. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haſte; but till I come again,
No bed ſhall e'er be guilty of my ſtay;
No reſt be interpoſer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to a Street in* Venice.

Enter Shylock, Solarino, Anthonio, *and the Gaoler.*

Shy. Gaoler, look to him: tell not me of mercy.
This is the fool that lent out money gratis.
Gaoler, look to him.

Anth. Hear me yet, good Shylock?

Shy. I'll have my bond; ſpeak not againſt my bond;
I've ſworn an oath, that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dſt me dog, before thou hadſt a cauſe;
But ſince I am a dog, beware my fangs.
The duke ſhall grant me juſtice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art ſo fond
To come abroad with him, at his requeſt.

Anth. I pray thee, hear me ſpeak?

Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee ſpeak:
I'll have my bond; and therefore, ſpeak no more.
I'll not be made a ſoft and dull-ey'd fool,
To ſhake the head, relent, and ſigh, and yield
To Chriſtian interceſſors. Follow not;
I'll have no ſpeaking; I will have my bond.
[*Exit* Shylock.

Solar. It is the moſt impenetrable cur,
That ever kept with men.

Anth. Let him alone.
I'll follow him no more with bootleſs pray'rs.
He ſeeks my life; his reaſon well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures,
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

Sola. I am ſure the duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.
Anth. The duke cannot deny the courſe of law:
For the commodity that ſtrangers have
With us in Venice, if it be deny'd,
Will much impeach the juſtice of the ſtate;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Conſiſteth of all nations. Therefore, go;
Theſe griefs and loſſes, have ſo 'bated me,
That I ſhall hardly ſpare a pound of fleſh,
To-morrow, to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on; pray heav'n Baſſanio come
To ſee me pay his debt, and then I care not!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Chamber in* Portia's *Houſe.*

Enter Portia, Neriſſa, Lorenzo, Jeſſica, *and* Balthazar.

Lor. Madam, although I ſpeak it in your preſence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of godlike amity; which appears moſt ſtrongly,
In bearing thus the abſence of you lord.
But if you knew to whom you ſhew this honour,
How true a gentiman you ſend relief to,
How dear a lover of my lord, your huſband;
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than cuſtomary bounty can enforce you.
Por. I never did repent of doing good,
And ſhall not, now;
Therefore, no more of it: Hear other things.——
Lorenzo, I commit into you hands
The huſbandry and manage of my houſe,
Until my lord's return. For mine own part,
I have tow'rd heaven breath'd a ſecret vow,
To live in pray'r and contemplation,
Only attended by Neriſſa here,
Until her huſband and my lord's return.
There is a monaſtery, two miles off,
And there we will abide. I do deſire you
Not to deny this impoſition;
The which my love, and ſome neceſſity,
Now lays upon you.
Lor. Madam, with all my heart;
I ſhall obey you in all fair commands.
Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jeſſica,
In place of lord Baſſanio and myſelf.
So, fare you well, till we ſhall meet again.
Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!
Jeſ. I wiſh your ladyſhip all heart's content.
Por. I thank you, for your wiſh; and am well pleas'd
To wiſh it back on you. Fare you well, Jeſſica.
[*Exeunt* Jeſ. *and* Lor.
Now, Balthazar,
As I have ever found thee honeſt, true,
So let me find thee ſtill. Take this ſame letter,
And uſe thou all th' endeavour of a man,
In ſpeed to Padua: ſee thou render this
Into my couſin's hand, Doctor Bellario.
And look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd ſpeed,
Unto the Traject, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waſte no time in words,
But get thee gone; I ſhall be there before thee.
Bal. Madam, I go, with all convenient ſpeed.
[*Exit.*
Por. Come on, Neriſſa; I have work in hand,
That you yet know not of. We'll ſee our huſbands
Before they think of us.
Ner. Shall they ſee us?
Por. They ſhall, Neriſſa; but in ſuch a habit,
That they ſhall think we are accompliſhed
With what we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both apparell'd like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace;
And ſpeak between the change of man and boy,
With a reed voice; and turn two mincing ſteps
Into a manly ſtride; and ſpeak of frays,
Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies ſought my love,
Which I denying, they fell ſick and dy'd;
I could not do with all: then I'll repent,
And wiſh, for all that, that I had not kill'd them.
And twenty of theſe puny lies I tell;
That men ſhall ſwear I've diſcontinu'd ſchool,
Above a twelvemonth. I have in my mind,
A thouſand raw tricks of theſe bragging jacks,
Which I will practiſe.
But, come, I'll tell thee all my whole device,
When I am in my coach, which ſtays for us,
At the park-gate; and therefore, haſte away;
For we muſt meaſure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Launcelot *and* Jeſſica.

Laun. Yes, truly; for look you, the ſins of the father are to be laid upon the children; therefore, I promiſe you, I fear you. I was always plain with you; and ſo now I ſpeak my agitation of the matter: therefore, be of good cheer; for truly, I think, you are damn'd. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good, and that is but a kind of baſtard hope, neither.

Jeſ. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not; that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jeſ. That were a kind of baſtard hope, indeed! So the ſins of my mother ſhould be viſited upon me.

Laun. Truly, then, I fear you are damn'd, both by father and mother; thus, when you ſhun Scylla, your father, you fall into Charybdis, your mother. Well, you are gone, both ways.

Jeſ. I ſhall be ſaved by my huſband; he hath made me a Chriſtian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he; we were Chriſtians enough before, e'en as many as could well live one by another. This making of Chriſtians will raiſe the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we ſhall not, ſhortly, have a raſher on the coals for money.

Enter Lorenzo.

Jeſ. I'll tell my huſband, Laucelot, what you ſay. Here he comes.

Lor. I ſhall grow jealous of you, ſhortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jeſ. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo; Launcelot, and I are out; he tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heav'n, becauſe I am a Jew's daughter: and, he ſays, you are no good member of the common-wealth; for in converting Jews to Chriſtians, you raiſe the price of pork.

Lor. I ſhall anſwer that better to the common-wealth, than you can by getting up of the negro's belly. The Moor is with child by you, Launcelot.

Laun. It is much, that the Moor ſhould be more than reaſon: but if ſhe be leſs than an honeſt woman, ſhe is, indeed, more than I took her for.

Lor. How every fool can play upon the word! Go in, ſirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, Sir; they have all ſtomachs.

Lor. Good lord, what a wit-ſnapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, Sir; only cover is the word.

Lor. Will you cover then, Sir?

Laun. Not ſo, Sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occaſion! Wilt thou ſhew the whole wealth of thy wit, in an inſtant? I pray thee underſtand a plain man, in his plain meaning. Go to thy fellows, bid them cover the table, ſerve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, Sir, it ſhall be ſerv'd in; for the meat, Sir, in ſhall be cover'd; for your coming in to dinner, Sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits ſhall govern. [*Exit* Laun.

Lor. O dear diſcretion, how his words are ſuited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words. And I do know
A many fools that ſtand in better place,
Garniſh'd like him, that for a tricky word
Defy the matter. How far'ſt thou, Jeſſica?
And now, good ſweet, ſay thy opinion,
How doſt thou like the lord Baſſanio's wife?

Jeſ. Paſt all expreſſing. It is very meet
The lord Baſſanio live an upright life;
For, having ſuch a bleſſing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heav'n here on earth:
And if on earth he do not merit it,
In reaſon, he ſhould never come to heav'n.
Why, if two gods ſhould play ſome heav'nly match,
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there muſt be ſomething elſe
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even ſuch a huſband
Haſt thou of me, as ſhe is for a wife.

Jeſ. Nay, but aſk my opinion too of that.

Lor. I will, anon; firſt let us go to dinner.

Jeſ. Nay, let me praiſe you, while I have a ſtomach.

Lor. No, pray thee, let it ſerve for table-talk;
Then, howſoe'er thou ſpeak'ſt, 'mong other things
I ſhall digeſt it.

Jeſ. Well, I'll ſet forth. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE, *the Senate-Houſe in* Venice.

Enter the Duke, *the Senators*; Anthonio, Baſſanio, *and* Gratiano, *at the Bar.*

Duke. WHAT, is Anthonio here?

Antb. Ready, ſo pleaſe your grace.

Duke. I'm ſorry for thee. Thou art come to anſwer
A ſtony adverſary, an inhuman wretch,
Uncapable of pity; void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

Antb. I have heard,
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rig'rous courſe; but ſince he ſtands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppoſe
My patience to his fury; and am arm'd
To ſuffer, with a quietneſs of ſpirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Sal. He's ready at the door; he comes, my lord.

Enter Shylock.

Duke. Make room, and let him ſtand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think ſo too,
That thou but lead'ſt this faſhion of thy malice,
To the laſt hour of act; and then, 'tis thought,
Thou'lt ſhew thy mercy and remorſe more ſtrange,
Than is thy ſtrange apparent cruelty;
And, where thou now exact'ſt the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's fleſh,
Thou wilt not only loſe the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleneſs and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his loſſes,
That have of late ſo huddled on his back,
Enough to preſs a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiſeration of his ſtate,
From braſſy boſoms, and rough hearts of flint;
From ſtubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courteſy.
We all expect a gentle anſwer, Jew.

Shy. I have poſſeſs'd your grace of what I purpoſe;
And by our holy ſabbath have I ſworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter, and your city's freedom!
You'll aſk me why I rather chuſe to have
A weight of carrion fleſh, than to receive
Three thouſand ducats? I'll not anſwer that;
But ſay, it is my humour! Is it anſwer'd?
What if my houſe be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleas'd to give ten thouſand ducats,
To have it bane'd? What, are you anſwer'd yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some that are mad if they behold a cat;
And others, when the bagpipe ſings i' th' noſe,
Cannot contain their urine, for affection.
Maſterleſs paſſion ſways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loaths. Now, for your anſwer,
As there is no firm reaſon to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmleſs, neceſſary cat;
Why he, a ſwollen bag-pipe; but of force
Muſt yield to ſuch inevitable ſhame,
As to offend, himſelf being offended:
So can I give no reaſon, nor I will not,
More than a lodg'd hate, and a certain loathing,
I bear Anthonio, that I follow thus
A loſing ſuit againſt him. Are you anſwer'd?

Baſſ. This is no anſwer, thou unfeeling man,
T' excuſe the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to pleaſe thee with my anſwer.

Baſſ. Do all men kill the thing they do not love?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Baſſ. Ev'ry offence is not a hate at firſt.

Shy. What, would'ſt thou have a ſerpent ſting thee twice?

Antb. I pray you, think, you queſtion with a Jew.
You may as well go ſtand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood 'bate his uſual height.
You may as well uſe queſtion with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb.
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noiſe,
When they are fretted with the guſts of heav'n.
You may as well do any thing moſt hard,
As ſeek to ſoften that (than which, what's harder?)
His Jewiſh heart. Therefore, I do beſeech you,
Make no more offers, uſe no farther means;
But, with all brief and plain conveniency,
Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will.

Baſſ. For thy three thouſand ducats here are ſix.

Shy. If ev'ry ducat in ſix thouſand ducats,
Were in ſix parts, and ev'ry part a ducat,
I would not draw them, I would have my bond.

Duke. How ſhalt thou hope for mercy, rend'ring none?

Shy. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchas'd slave,
Which, like your asses, and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish part,
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burdens? Let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer,
The slaves are ours. So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fy upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice:
I stand for judgment: Answer; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my pow'r I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Sal. My lord, here stays, without,
A messenger, with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters, call the messenger.

Bass. Good cheer, Anthonio! What, man, courage yet;
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Anth. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

Enter Nerissa, *dress'd like a Lawyer's Clerk.*

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace.

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Shy. To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt, there.

Gra. Can no pray'rs pierce thee?

Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

Gra. O be thou damn'd, inexorable dog,
And for thy life let justice be accus'd!
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infus'd itself in thee: for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd, and ravenous.

Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud.
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?

Ner. He attendeth here, hard by,
To know your answer whether you'll admit him.

Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place:
Mean time, the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

YOUR Grace shall understand, that, at the receipt of your letter, I am very sick: but at the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome, *his name is* Balthazar; *I acquainted him with the cause in controversy, between the Jew and* Anthonio *the merchant. We turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion, which, bettered with his own learning, (the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend) comes with him at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request, in my stead. I beseech you let his lack of years be no impediment, to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.*

Enter Portia, *dress'd like a Doctor of Laws.*

Duke. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes.
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.
Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

Por. I did, my lord.

Duke. You're welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

Por. I am inform'd thoroughly of the case.
Which is the Merchant here? and which the Jew?

Duke. Anthonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Por. Is your name Shylock?

Shy. Shylock is my name.

Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule, that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you, as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not? [*To* Anthonio.

Anth. Ay, so he says.

Por. Do you confess the bond?

Anth. I do.

Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shy. On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.

Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heav'n
Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shews the force of temporal pow'r,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptre'd sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself:
And earthly pow'r doth then shew likest Heav'n's,
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Tho' justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy;
And that same pray'r doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much,
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which, if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the Merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in court;
Yea, twice the sum; if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.
If that will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth: And, I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority;
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por. It must not be: there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree establish'd.
'Twill be recorded for a precedent;
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

Shy. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel.
O wise young judge, how do I honour thee!

Por. I pray you let me look upon the bond.

Shy. Here 'tis, moſt reverend doctor; here it is.
Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.
Shy. An oath, an oath——I have an oath in heav'n.
Shall I lay perjury upon my ſoul?
No, not for Venice.
Por. Why this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully, by this, the Jew may claim
A pound of fleſh, to be by him cut off,
Neareſt the merchant's heart. Be merciful,
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shy. When it is paid, according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law: your expoſition
Hath been moſt ſound. I charge you, by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deſerving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my ſoul I ſwear,
There is no power in the tongue of man,
To alter me. I ſtay here on my bond.
Ant. Moſt heartily I do beſeech the court
To give the judgment.
Por. Why, then, thus it is;
You muſt prepare your boſom for his knife.
Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!
Por. For the intent and purpoſe of the law,
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
Shy. 'Tis very true. O wiſe and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
Por. Therefore lay bare your boſom.
Shy. Ay, his breaſt!
So ſays the bond; doth it not, noble judge?
Neareſt his heart; thoſe are the very words.
Por. It is ſo. Are there ſcales to weigh the fleſh?
Shy. I have them ready.
Por. Have by ſome ſurgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To ſtop his wounds, leſt he ſhould bleed to death.
Shy. Is it ſo nominated in the bond?
Por. It is not ſo expreſs'd; but what of that?
'Twere good you do ſo much, for charity.
Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.
Por. Come, merchant, have you any thing to ſay?
Ant. But little: I am arm'd, and well prepar'd.
Give me your hand, Baſſanio; fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fall'n to this for you:
For herein fortune ſhews herſelf more kind
Than is her cuſtom. It is ſtill her uſe,
To let the wretched man out-live his wealth;
To view with hollow eye, and wrinkled brow,
An age of poverty: from which ling'ring penance
Of ſuch miſery doth ſhe cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife;
Tell her the proceſs of Anthonio's end;
Say, how I lov'd you; ſpeak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge,
Whether Baſſanio had not once a love.
Repent not you that you ſhall loſe your friend;
And he repents not, that he pays your debt:
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it inſtantly, with all my heart.
Baſſ. Anthonio, I am married to a wife,
Which is as dear to me as life itſelf;
But life itſelf, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me eſteem'd above thy life.
Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If ſhe were by to hear you make the offer.
Gra. I have a wife, whom I proteſt I love;
I would ſhe were in heav'n, ſo ſhe could
Intreat ſome pow'r to change this currish Jew.
Ner. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wiſh would make, elſe, an unquiet houſe.
Shy. Theſe be the Chriſtian huſbands! I've a daughter;
Would any of the ſtock of Barrabbas
Had been her huſband, rather than a Chriſtian!
[*Aſide.*
We triſle time; I pray thee, purſue ſentence.
Por. A pound of that ſame merchant's fleſh is thine,
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Moſt rightful judge!
Por. And you muſt cut this fleſh from off his breaſt,
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shy. Moſt learned judge! a ſentence. Come, prepare.
Por. Tarry a little; there is ſomething elſe:
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expreſsly are, a pound of fleſh.
Then take thy bond, take thou the pound of fleſh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou doſt ſhed
One drop of Chriſtian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiſcate
Unto the ſtate of Venice.
Gra. O upright judge? mark, Jew! O learned judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyſelf ſhalt ſee the act!
For, as thou urgeſt juſtice, be aſſur'd,
Thou ſhalt have juſtice, more than thou deſir'ſt.
Gra. O learned judge! mark, Jew! a learned judge!
Shy. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice,
And let the Chriſtian go.
Baſſ. Here is the money.
Por. The Jew ſhall have all juſtice. Soft! no haſte;
He ſhall have nothing but the penalty.
Gra. O Jew! an upright judge! a learned judge!
Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the fleſh!
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou leſs nor more,
But juſt a pound of fleſh: if thou tak'ſt more,
Or leſs, than a juſt pound, be't but ſo much
As makes it light or heavy in the ſubſtance,
On the diviſion of the twentieth part
Of one poor ſcruple; nay, if the ſcale turn
But in the eſtimation of a hair,
Thou dy'ſt, and all thy goods are confiſcate.
Gra. A ſecond Daniel! a Daniel, Jew!
Now, Infidel, I have thee on the hip.
Por. Why doth the Jew pauſe? take the forfeiture.
Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.
Baſſ. I have it ready for thee; here it is.
Por. He hath refus'd it in the open court;
He ſhall have merely juſtice, and his bond.
Gra. A Daniel, ſtill ſay I! a ſecond Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.
Shy. Shall I not barely have my principal?
Por. Thou ſhalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be ſo taken at thy peril, Jew.
Shy. Why then the devil give him good of it!
I'll ſtay no longer queſtion.
Por. Tarry, Jew;
The law hath yet another hold on you!
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be prov'd againſt an alien,
That by direct, or indirect attempts,
He ſeeks the life of any citizen,
The party, 'gainſt the which he doth contrive,
Shall ſeize on half his goods; the other half

Comes to the privy coffer of the ſtate;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainſt all other voice.
In which predicament, I ſay, thou ſtand'ſt.
For it appears, by manifeſt proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou haſt contriv'd againſt the very life
Of the defendant; and thou haſt incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehears'd.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

Gra. Beg that thou may'ſt have leave to hang thyſelf!
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the ſtate,
Thou haſt not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou muſt be hang'd at the ſtate's charge.

Duke. That thou may'ſt ſee the diff'rence of our ſpirit,
I pardon thee thy life, before thou aſk it;
For half thy wealth, it is Anthonio's.
The other half comes to the general ſtate,
Which humbleneſs may drive unto a fine.

Por. Ay, for the ſtate; not for Anthonio.

Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my houſe, when you do take the prop
That doth ſuſtain my houſe; you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Anthonio?

Gra. A halter, gratis; nothing elſe, for heav'n's ſake.

Ant. So pleaſe my lord the duke, and all the court,
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; ſo he will let me have
The other half in uſe, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately ſtole his daughter.
Two things provided more, that for this favour
He preſently become a Chriſtian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies poſſeſs'd,
Unto his ſon Lorenzo, and his daughter.

Duke. He ſhall do this, or elſe I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Por. Art thou contented, Jew? What doſt thou ſay?

Shy. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well; ſend the deed after me,
And I will ſign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra. In chriſt'ning thou ſhalt have two godfathers.
Had I been judge, thou ſhould'ſt have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.
[*Exit* Shylock.

Duke. Sir, I intreat you home with me to dinner.

Por. I humbly do deſire your grace's pardon;
I muſt away, this night, to Padua;
And it is meet, I preſently ſet forth.

Duke. I am ſorry that your leiſure ſerves you not.
Anthonio, gratify this gentleman;
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.
[*Exit Duke, and his Train.*

Baſſ. Moſt worthy gentleman! I and my friend
Have, by your wiſdom, been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thouſand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

Ant. And ſtand indebted, over and above,
In love and ſervice to you, evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well ſatisfy'd;
And I, delivering you, am ſatisfy'd,
And therein do account myſelf well paid;
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me, when we meet again:
I wiſh you well; and ſo I take my leave.

Baſſ. Dear Sir, of force I muſt attempt you farther.
Take ſome remembrance of us, for a tribute,
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Por. You preſs me far, and therefore I will yield.
Give me your gloves, I'll wear 'em for your ſake:
And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you.
Do not draw back your hand, I'll take no more;
And you in love ſhall not deny me this.

Baſſ. This ring, good Sir! Alas, it is a trifle!
I will not ſhame myſelf to give you this.

Por. I will have nothing elſe, but only this;
And now, methinks, I have a mind to it.

Baſſ. There's more depends on this, than is the value:
The deareſt ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation;
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

Por. I ſee, Sir, you are liberal in offers:
You taught me firſt to beg; and now, methinks,
You teach me how a beggar ſhould be anſwer'd.

Baſſ. Good Sir, this ring was giv'n me by my wife,
And when ſhe put it on, ſhe made me vow,
That I ſhould neither ſell, nor give, nor loſe it.

Por. That 'ſcuſe ſerves many men to ſave their gifts;
And if your wife be not a mad woman,
And know how well I have deſery'd the ring,
She would not hold out enmity for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!
[*Exit, with* Neriſſa.

Anth. My lord Baſſanio, let him have the ring:
Let his deſervings, and my love withal,
Be valu'd 'gainſt your wife's commandment.

Baſſ. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him:
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou can'ſt,
Unto Anthonio's houſe: away, make haſte. [*Ex.* Gra.
Come, you and I will thither, preſently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont. Come, Anthonio. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Street.*

Re-enter Portia *and* Neriſſa.

Por. Enquire the Jew's houſe out, give him this deed
And let him ſign it; we'll away, to-night,
And be a day before our huſbands home:
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Fair Sir, you are well o'er-ta'en:
My lord Baſſanio, upon more advice,
Hath ſent you here this ring, and doth intreat
Your company at dinner.

Por. That cannot be.
This ring I do accept, moſt thankfully,
And ſo I pray you, tell him; furthermore,
I pray you ſhew my youth old Shylock's houſe.

Gra. That will I do.

Ner. Sir, I would ſpeak with you.
I'll ſee if I can get my huſband's ring, [*To* Por.
Which I did make him ſwear to keep for ever.

Por. Thou may'ſt, I warrant. We ſhall have old ſwearing,
That they did give their rings away to men;
But we'll out-face them, and out-ſwear them too.
Away, make haſte; thou know'ſt where I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good Sir, will you ſhew me to this houſe? [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE, Belmont. *A Garden belonging to* Portia's *Houſe. Moon-Light.*

Enter Lorenzo *and* Jeſſica.

Lor. THE moon ſhines bright.—In ſuch a night as this,
When the ſweet wind did gently kiſs the trees,
And they did make no noiſe; in ſuch a night,
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan wall;
And ſigh'd his ſoul towards the Grecian tents,
Where Creſſid lay, that night.

Jeſ. In ſuch a night,
Did Thiſbe fearfully o'er-trip the dew;
And ſaw the lion's ſhadow, ere himſelf,
And ran diſmay'd away.

Lor. In ſuch a night,
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand,
Upon the wild ſea-banks, and wav'd her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jeſ. In ſuch a night,
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æſon.

Lor. In ſuch a night,
Did Jeſſica ſteal from the wealthy Jew,
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice,
As far as Belmont.

Jeſ. And in ſuch a night,
Did young Lorenzo ſwear he lov'd her well;
Stealing her ſoul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. And in ſuch a night,
Did pretty Jeſſica (like a little ſhrew)
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jeſ. I would out-night you, did nobody come;
But, hark! I hear the footing of a man.

Enter Balthazar.

Lor. Who comes ſo faſt, in ſilence of the night?

Bal. A friend.

Lor. What friend? Your name, I pray you, friend?

Bal. Balthazar is my name; and I bring word,
My miſtreſs will, before the break of day,
Be here, at Belmont. She doth ſtray about
By holy croſſes, where ſhe kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor. Who comes with her?

Bal. None, but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my maſter yet return'd?

Lor. He is not, nor have we yet heard of him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jeſſica,
And ceremoniouſly let us prepare
Some welcome for the miſtreſs of the houſe.

Enter Launcelot.

Laun. Sola, ſola, wo, ha, ho, ſola, ſola!

Lor. Who calls?

Laun. Sola, did you ſee maſter Lorenzo and miſtreſs Lorenzo? Sola, ſola!

Lor. Leave hollowing, man: here.

Laun. Sola! Where! where?

Lor. Here.

Laun. Tell him, there's a poſt come from my maſter, with his horn full of good news. My maſter will be here ere morning.

Lor. Sweet love, let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet, no matter: Why ſhould we go in?
My friend, Balthazar, ſignify, I pray you,
Within the houſe, your miſtreſs is at hand;

[*Exit* Bal.

And bring your muſic forth into the air.
How ſweet the moon-light ſleeps upon this bank!
Here will we ſit, and let the ſounds of muſic
Creep in our ears; ſoft ſtillneſs, and the night,
Become the touches of ſweet harmony.
Sit, Jeſſica: look, how the floor of heav'n,
Is thick inlay'd with pattens of bright gold.
There's not the ſmalleſt orb, which thou behold'ſt,
But in his motion like an angel ſings,
Still choiring to the young-ey'd cherubims;
Such harmony is in immortal ſounds!
But whilſt this muſty veſture of decay,
Doth groſsly cloſe us in, we cannot hear it.
Come, hoa, and wake Diana with a hymn;
With ſweeteſt touches pierce your miſtreſs ear,
And draw her home with muſic.

SONG, *by* Lorenzo.

I.

To keep my gentle Jeſſe,
What labour wou'd ſeem hard,
Each toilſome taſk how eaſy!
Her love the ſweet reward.

II.

The bee thus, uncomplaining,
Eſteems no toil ſevere,
The ſweet reward obtaining,
Of honey all the year.

Jeſ. I'm never merry, when I hear ſweet muſic.

Lor. The reaſon is, your ſpirits are attentive!
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud,
(Which is the hot condition of their blood:)
If they perchance but hear a trumpet ſound,
Or any air of muſic touch their ears,
You ſhall perceive them make a mutual ſtand;
Their ſavage eyes turn'd to a modeſt gaze,
By the ſweet power of muſic. Therefore, the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, ſtones, and floods;
Since nought ſo ſtockiſh, hard, and full of rage,
But muſic, for the time, doth change his nature.
The man that hath no muſic in himſelf,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of ſweet ſounds,
Is fit for treaſons, ſtratagems, and ſpoils;
The motions of his ſpirits are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus.
Let no ſuch man be truſted. Mark the muſic.

Enter Portia *and* Neriſſa.

Por. That light we ſee, is burning in my hall:
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So ſhines a good deed in a naughty world.

Ner. When the moon ſhone, we did not ſee the candle.

Por. So doth the greater glory dim the leſs.

Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceiv'd, of Portia.

Por. He knows me, as the blind man knows the cuckow,
By the bad voice.

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.

Por. We have been praying for our huſbands healths;
Which ſpeed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they returned?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a meſſenger before,
To ſignify their coming.

Por. Go, Neriſſa,
Give order to my ſervants, that they take
No note at all of our being abſent hence;
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jeſſica, nor you.

[*A Trumpet ſounds.*

Lor. Your husband is at hand, I hear his trumpet;
We are no tell-tales, Madam; fear you not.
Enter Bassanio, Anthonio, Gratiano, *and their followers.*
Por. You are welcome home, my lord.
Bass. I thank you, Madam; give welcome to my friend.
This is the man, this is Anthonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.
Por. You should, in all sense, be much bound to him;
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.
Anth. No more than I am well acquitted of.
Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house;
It must appear in other ways than words;
Therefore, I scant this breathing courtesy.
Gra. By yonder moon, I swear, you do me wrong; [*To* Nerissa.
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk.
Would he were hang'd that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.
Por. A quarrel, ho, already! What's the matter?
Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring,
That she did give me, whose poesy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife; *Love me, and leave me not.*
Ner. What talk you of the poesy, or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave:
Tho' not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Give it a judge's clerk! But well I know,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face, that had it.
Gra. He will, and if he live to be a man.
Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.
Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth;
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk;
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee:
I could not for my heart deny it him.
Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift:
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,
And riveted with faith upon your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands,
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it,
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;
And 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.
Bass. Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it. [*Aside.*
Gra. My lord Bassanio gave his ring away,
Unto the judge that begg'd it, and, indeed,
Deserv'd it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine:
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.
Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you receiv'd of me.
Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.
Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed
Until I see the ring.
Ner. Nor I in yours,
Till I again see mine.
Bass. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.
Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to retain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleas'd to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe;
I'll die for't, but some woman had the ring.
Bass. No, by mine honour, Madam; by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor;
Ev'n he that did uphold the very life
Of my dear friend.
Had you been there, I think, you would have begg'd
The ring of me, to give the worthy doctor.
Por. Let not that doctor e're come near my house;
Since he hath got the jewel that I lov'd,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you;
I'll not deny him any thing I have,
No, nor my body, nor my husband's bed.
Know him I shall, I am well sure of it.
Lye not a night from home; watch me, like Argus:
If you do not, if I be left alone,
Now, by mine honour, which is yet my own,
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.
Ner. And I, his clerk; therefore, be well advis'd,
How you do leave me to mine own protection.
Gra. Well, do you so; let me not take him then;
For if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.
Anth. I am th' unhappy subject of these quarrels.
Por. Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome, notwithstanding.
Bass. Pardon this fault; and, by my soul I swear,
I never more will break an oath with thee.
Anth. I once did lend my body, for his weal;
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
[*To* Portia.
Had quite miscarry'd. I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.
Por. Then thou shalt be his surety. Give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.
Anth. Here, lord Bassanio, swear to keep this ring.
Bass. By heav'n, it is the same I gave the doctor.
Por. I had it of him. Pardon me, Bassanio;
For by this ring the doctor lay with me.
Ner. And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano;
For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this, last night, did lye with me.
Gra. Why, this is like the mending of highways
In summer, where the ways are fair enough.
What! are we cuckolds, ere we have deserv'd it?
Por. Speak not so grossly. You are all amaz'd.
Here is a letter, read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario.
There you shall find, that Portia was the doctor;
Nerissa, there, her clerk. Lorenzo, here,

Shall witneſs I ſet forth as ſoon as you,
And even but now return'd: I have not yet
Enter'd my houſe. Anthonio, you are welcome:
And I have better news in ſtore for you,
Than you expect. Unſeal this letter ſoon,
There you ſhall find, three of your argoſies
Are richly come to harbour, ſuddenly.
You ſhall not know by what ſtrange accident
I chanced on this letter.

Antb. I am dumb.

Baſſ. Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?

Gra. Were you the clerk, that is to make me a cuckold?

Ner. Ay, but the clerk that never means to do it,
Unleſs he live until he be a man.

Baſſ. Sweet doctor, you ſhall be my bedfellow;
When I am abſent, then lye with my wife.

Antb. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain, that my ſhips
Are ſafely come to road.

Por. How now, Lorenzo?
My clerk hath ſome good comforts, too, for you.

Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.
There do I give to you and Jeſſica,
From the rich Jew, a ſpecial deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies poſſeſs'd of.

Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of ſtarved people.

Por. It is almoſt morning,
And yet, I'm ſure, you are not ſatisfy'd
Of theſe events at full. Let us go in,
And charge us there, upon interr'gatories,
And we will anſwer all things faithfully.

Gra. Let it be ſo: the firſt interr'gatory,
That my Neriſſa ſhall be ſworn on, is,
Whether till the next night ſhe had rather ſtay,
Or go to bed now, being two hours to day?
But were the day come, I ſhould wiſh it dark,
Till I were couching with the doctor's clerk.
Well, while I live, I'll fear no other thing
So ſore, as keeping ſafe Neriſſa's ring.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*

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